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ABSTRACT

Designed for child caregivers, this guide to research on infants and toddlers offers references to works that provide reasons for high quality care and increase caregivers' understanding of ways to facilitate the optimal development of babies. Citations concern abuse, attachment, caregiver role, child care effects, child care quality, child competence and intelligence, discipline, socialization, enrichment programs, fathering, gender, infant mental health, longitudinal effects of intervention, language, parent-child relations, transactional influences, peers, prosocial behavior, risk factors, special needs, temperament, and buffers. Materials that include information that can help parents, caregivers, or children overcome difficult conditions are noted. Nearly 50 references are cited. (RH)

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Honig, A.S. & Wittmer, D.S.

Recent infant/toddler researches: A helpful guide for caregivers.[1]

Babies are special people. Their physiology, their nutritional needs, their contact comfort needs, their learning styles are radically different from those of older children. Without secure attachments to one and preferably two attuned caregivers, who are genuinely responsive to infant signals, good interpreters of infant distress, and of infant communications (whether coos, jargon, or two word telegraphic speech) infants will not flourish. Theoretical work by Mahler, Erikson, Winnicott and others have made clear just how important the role of the loving responsive partner is in communication and cuddling and provision of nurturance for babies. Yet theory is not enough. Caregivers working with infants and toddlers need to know major research findings with children under three.

Sometimes parents request inappropriate actions, such as excessive cognitive pushing of babies to learn school-type materials much beyond the ability of infant sensorimotor and early preoperational functioning. Some parents request harsh or punitive or indifferent behaviors of caregivers in group care situations, such as demanding that a baby be left to cry and get himself to sleep, or that a baby be punished for a toileting accident during early training efforts. Research "ammunition" can help group care personnel to speak not only from their own clinical experience with babies, but from the best resources that research can provide.

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The researches that will be discussed for this session are divided into 20 categories alphabetically. They represent work of the past decade that can be helpful in understanding how to answer those who may be ignorant of the reasons for quality care and so may challenge the optimal practices that caregivers and centers are trying to put into place for infants. For example, Finkelstein's work show that unless prosocial teaching goes along with enriched cognitive inputs for babies, then the best intellective intervention program may produce youngsters who later on are 15 times more aggressive on kindergarten playgrounds than low-income control peers who have never attended a University-based daycare program with cognitive emphasis.

Another important example is the finding by Main and George that abused toddlers do not respond positively to friendly overtures by caregivers. They may aggress against their teachers as well as their peers, and sidle up to teachers with eye-

1. Paper presented at the annual meetings of the National Association or the Education of Young Children, Atlanta Georgia, November 2-5, 1989.

aversive contact. Also, they may show anger and distress rather than empathy if a peer is hurting. Caregivers who do know about these important researches will be better able to diagnose cases of suspected abuse and to prevent adult retaliation behaviors. They can better summon up empathy as a response to help abused toddlers become "reparented" through tender, responsive ministrations, as well as try to reach out to parents in dysfunctional families and involve them in parent education in order to help the toddler.

Some of the researches presented here seem superficially to suggest that infant day care has no untoward results. Yet, if one reads them carefully, causes for concern arise. For example, the work by Andersson, concluding that infant day care leads to successful achievement and social interactions in 8 year olds as rated by their teachers, needs to be read carefully. For his work took place in Sweden, with no infant beginning day care until after 7 months; and full work benefits were paid to parents who stayed at home during that period. Overwhelmingly, Swedish moms nurse their babies. Also, day care workers have strong training requirements, are well paid and are respected professionals. Thus, Andersson's findings must be contrasted with the American situation, where infants may begin group care far earlier and where centers have much staff turnover (over 41% in the latest Day Care Staffing study reported in the November, 1989 issue of Young Children) and far less training for caregivers.

Field's research must be read in a similar critical vein. Although the researchers in her study did not observe any difference in assaultive behaviors of the children who had been in infant care or not, teachers did report significantly higher ratings of aggression for preschoolers who as infants had been in full time rather than part time care in infancy. And the teachers knew their preschoolers well.

Health research shows that handwashing is the single most effective factor in preventing infectious disease in day care settings. Yet, some states do not even require handwashing in infant care facilities, according to Kendall.

Caregivers who want to use researches in order to enhance their knowledge base and skills in interacting with infants as well as their comfort and information-level in talking with parents, will need to learn to read researches with a critical eye. For, sometimes, the title of a research report may be misleading. Buried in the research report may be news that some infant care practices are not quite as benign for babies as some people would like to believe. In any case, researches are an important resource for quality infant/toddler caregiving. In that spirit, we suggest that information from the following researches can be useful for understanding more about babies and how to support and facilitate their optimal development.

Recent Infant/Toddler Researches: Ammunition for Caregivers
Alice Honig, Ph.D. & Donna Wittmer, Ph.D.
NAEYC --- Atlanta --- November 1989

1. Abuse

Main, M. & George, C. (1985). Responses of abused and disadvantaged toddlers to distress in agemates: A study in the day care setting. Developmental Psychology,21, 407-412.

2. Attachment

Ainsworth, M. (1982). Early caregiving and later patterns of attachment. In Klaus, M. & Robertson, M. (Eds.). Birth, Interaction, and Attachment. Skillman, NJ: Johnson & Johnson.

Erickson, M., Sroufe, A., & Egeland, B. (1985). The relationship between quality of attachment and behavior problems in preschool in a high-risk sample. In I. Bretherton & E. Waters (Eds.), Growing points of attachment. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 50, 147-167.

3. Caregiver Role

Anderson, C., Nagle, R., Roberts, W. & Smith, J. (1981). Attachment to substitute caregivers as a function of center quality and caregiver involvement. Child Development, 52, 53-61.

Howes, C., Rodning, C., Galluzzo, D. & Myers, L. (1988). Attachment and child care. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 3, 403-416.

4. Childcare Effects (age of entry, length of day)

Andersson, B. (1989). Effects of public day-care. A longitudinal study. Child Development, 60, 857-866.

Belsky, J. (1986). Infant day care: A cause for concern. Zero to Three, 6, (5), 1-9.

Field, T. Masi, W. Golstein, S., Perry, S. & Parl, S. (1988). Infant day care facilitates preschool social behavior. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 3, 341-359.

Finkelstein, N. (1982). Aggression: Is it stimulated by day care? Young Children, 37 3-13.

Vaughn, B., Deane, K. & Waters, E. (1985). The impact of out-home care on child-mother attachment quality: Another look at some enduring questions. In Bretherton & E. Waters (Eds.), Growing points of attachment theory and research. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 50, 110-136.

5. Child Care Quality

Fosberg, S. & Hawkins, P. (1981). Final Report on the Nation-

al Day Care Home Study, Vol. 1. Cambridge, MA: ABT Associates.

Howes, C. & Olenick, M. (1986). Family and child care influences on toddler's compliance. Child Development, 57, 202-216.

McCartney, K., Scarr, S. Phillips, D. & Grojeck, S. (1985). Day care as intervention: Comparisons of varying quality programs. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 6, 247-260.

6. Competence/Intelligence

Frodi, A., Bridges, L. & Grolnick, W. (1985). Correlates of mastery-related behavior: A short-term longitudinal study of infants in their second year. Child Development, 56, 1291-1298.

Messer, D., McCarthy, M., McQuiston, S., MacTurk, R., Yarrow, L. & Vietze, P. (1986). Relation between mastery behavior in infancy and competence in early childhood. Developmental Psychology, 22, 366-372.

7. Discipline/Socialization

Honig, A. (1985). Compliance, control, and discipline. Young Children, Part 1, 40, (2), 50-58; Part 2, 40, (3), 47-52.

Power, T. & Chapieski, L. (1986). Use the rod, spoil the child. Psychology Today.

8. Enrichment Programs

**Burchinal, M., Lee, M. & Ramey, C. (1989). Type of daycare and preschool intellectual development in disadvantaged children. Child Development, 60, 128-137.

**Levenstein, P. (1988). Messages from home. The Mother-Child Home Program and the prevention of school disadvantage. Columbus OH: Ohio State University Press.

**Parents as Teachers National Center, University of Missouri-St. Louis, Marillac Hall, 8001 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, Mo. 63121-4499. (314) 553-5738.

**Rauh, V., Achenbach, T., Nurcombe, B., Howell, C. & Teti, D. (1988). Minimizing adverse effects of low birthweight: Four-year results of early intervention program. Child Development, 59, 544-553.

9. Fathering

Easterbrooks, M.A. & Goldberg, W.A. (1984) Toddler development in the family: Impact of father involvement and parenting characteristics. Child Development, 55, 740-752.

Pederson, F.A. (1982). Mother, father, and infant as an

interactive system. In J.Belsky (Ed.) In The Beginning. New York: Columbia University Press.

10. Gender

Fagot, B., Hagan, R., Leinbach, M. & Kronsberg, S. (1986). Differential reactions to assertive and communicative acts of toddler boys and girls. Child Development, 56, 1499-1505.

Wittmer, D.S. & Honig, A.S. (1988). Teacher re-creation of negative interactions with toddlers. In A.S. Honig (Ed.), Optimizing early child care and education (Special issue). Early Child Development and Care, 33, 77-88.

11. Infant Mental Health

Fraiberg, S. (Ed.), (1980). Clinical studies in infant mental health, The first year's of life. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Greenspan, S. & Greenspan, N. (1985). First Feelings. Brattleboro, Vermont: The Book Press.

Zero to Three Bulletin. Published by The National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, 733 N.W., Suite 912, Washington, D.C. 20005.

12. Intervention---longitudinal effects

**Garber, H.L. (1988). The Milwaukee Project: Preventing mental retardation in children at risk. Washington, DC: American Association of Mental Retardation.

**Lally, R., Mangione, P., Honig, A. & Wittmer, D. (April 1988). More pride, less delinquency: Findings from the ten-year follow-up study of the Syracuse University Family Development Research Program. Zero to Three, 13-18. National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, 733 15th St., N.W., Suite 912, Washington, D.C. 20005.

13. Language

Carew, J.V. (1980). Experience and the development of intelligence in young children at home and in day care. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 45, Serial No. 187.

Schachter, F. & Strage, A. (1982). Adults' talk and children's language development. In S.G. Moore and C.R. Cooper (Eds.), The Young Child: Reviews of Research, Vol. 3. Washington D.C.: NAEYC.

Tizard, B. (1981). Language at home and at school. in C. Cazden (Ed.) Language in Early Childhood Education. Revised edition. Washington, D.C.:NAEYC.

14. Parent-Child Relations/Transactional Influences

Bee, H.L., et. al. (1982). Prediction of IQ and language

skill from perinatal status, child performance, family characteristics, and mother-infant interaction. Child Development, 53, 1134-1156.

Tamis-LeMonda, C. & Bornstein, M. (1989). Habituation and maternal encouragement of attention in infancy as predictors of toddler language, play, and representational competence. Child Development, 60, 738-751.

15. Peers

Honig, A. & DePerna, C. (Spring, 1983). Research review: Peer relations of infants and toddlers. Day Care and Early Education, 10, 36-40.

Park, K & Waters, E. (1989). Security of attachment and preschool friendships. Child Development, 60, 1076-1081.

16. Prosocial

Pines, M. (1979). Good samaritans at age two? Psychology Today, 13, 66-77.

Rheingold, H.L. (1982). Little children's participation in the work of adults, a nascent prosocial behavior. Child Development, 53, 114-125.

17. Risk Factors

Greenberg, M. & Crnic, K. (1988). Longitudinal predictors of developmental status and social interaction in premature and full-term infants at age two. Child Development, 59, 554-570.

Honig, A. & Oski, F. (1986). Solemnity: A clinical risk index for iron deficient infants. A. Honig (Ed.), Risk Factors in Infancy. (69-84). New York: Gordon and Breach.

Kendall, E.D. (1988). Disease spread in day care: Cautions for infant programs. Tennesee's Children, 30, 5-6. Department of Education, Belmont College, Nashville, TN.

Rodning, C., Beckwith, L. & Howard, J. (1989). Summary of findings on attachment and play in prenatally drug exposed toddlers. UCLA, Department of Pediatrics, 1000 Veternal Avenue Rehab 23-10, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

Sameroff, A. & Seifer, R. (1983). Familial risk and child competence. Child Development, 54, 1254-1268.

18. Special Needs

Gallagher, J. (1989). A new policy initiative: Infants and toddlers with handicapping conditions. F. Howowitz & M. O'Brien (Eds.) American Psychologist, 44, (2),387-392.

19. Temperament

Belsky, J. & Rovine, M. (1987). Temperament and attachment

security in the strange situation. An empirical reapprochment. Child Development, 58, 787-795.

**Crockenberg, S. (1981). Infant irritability, mother responsiveness, and social support influences on the security of mother-infant attachment. Child Development, 52, 857-865.

20. Wonderful Buffers

**Ramey, C. & Gowen, J. (1986). A general systems approach to modifying risk for retarded development. A. Honig (Ed.), Risk Factors in Infancy (9-26). New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers

**Werner, E. (1984). Research in review: resilient children. Young Children, 40, 68-73.

** These references include information about buffers that help parents, caregivers, or children overcome adverse or difficult conditions.